

WORK STUDY GROUP RELATIVE TO THE POLICE COMMISSIONERS

October 7, 2021

A meeting of the Work Study Group Relative to the Police Commissioners was held Thursday, October 7, 2021, at 7:01 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and via Zoom teleconference.

The Zoom meeting link can be found on the agenda and on the city's website.

Alderswoman Shoshanna Kelly, Chairwoman, presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderswoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly, Chairwoman
Nicholas Dahl, Clerk
Marylou Blaisdell
Kendra Smith
Kerry Baxter

Members of the Committee absent: Alderman Richard A. Dowd – Vice Chairman
Eva Castillo
Mark Brave
Deborah Novotny

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Ernest Jette
Police Chief Michael Carignan
Jim Tollner, Police Commissioner
Matthew Plante, Police Commissioner

ROLL CALL

DISCUSSION

Chairwoman Kelly

The discussion this evening is to allow a community discussion with Wards 1, 4, 5, and 6. I wanted to just open this up like public comment. Has everybody been let in from the waiting room? That was a question to...

Jim McLean, Videographer

Yes they have been. Everybody is in.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay. Great. So. If people would like to make public comments, we'll do three minutes, name, address, and you know your comments. If you questions, those can be included in the comments. Is there anyone in the chamber that wishes to speak? I didn't see anything on the...? Okay.

- Wards 1, 4, 5, and 6

Nicholas Dahl, Police Commissioner

Nick Dahl, 6 Indian Rock Road, Nashua. Okay, good evening. I just wanted to make some comments. These are my own. Other members of the Committee may not feel the same as I do but I just want to go on record with this.

I realize we're all volunteers, busy with numerous other commitments but I believe we need some increased communication and coordination between these meetings. Just as an example, last week's agenda had one item under the discussion portion of the meeting. It was the Chief's presentation. The Deputy Chief came on behalf of the Chief. He was not aware that he was expected to make a presentation. He thought he was here for question and answers. During the meeting, we were also joined by Commissioner Shaheen from the Portsmouth Police Department and I as a Committee member was not aware that Ms. Shaheen had been invited. I may have missed something, but I believe others did not know it as well for the most part. I just bring that up because if we had not in advance, we may have been able to formulate questions in advance so that we could have taken fuller opportunity to learn about the selection process and function of the Portsmouth Police Commission. Frankly, I found that it was a missed opportunity because she took the time to join us and we didn't take full advantage of that. Again, my opinion.

Tonight's discussion item on the agenda is a Q&A session with Executive Counselors. However, it does not appear that any will attend. So given, that I'm not sure what we plan or hope to accomplish tonight. I know that sounds negative, but I just wanted to share my thought on that. I know the expected product from this Work Study Group is longer term than the election on November 2nd but I do believe some members of our community might be looking to this Work Study Group for some education on the Police Commission selection process and functions prior to casting a ballot.

As I already mentioned, I know we're all volunteers but I would hope we could make better use of our limited time going forward. I am hopeful that as a study group, we can have to identify and agree on topics and speakers in advance of meetings and ensure we obtain commitments from people we hope will add value to our efforts and that we as a committee can have some level of communication between meetings so we know in advance who is invited and who plans to attend future meetings. And again, I know everyone is busy. We're all volunteering and I know, for instance, the Chair of the Work Study Group has numerous other assignments on the Board of Aldermen. But those are my concerns. I thank you for listening.

Chairwoman Kelly

Mary Lou, if you wouldn't mind holding unless you - I just – there is somebody from the public. I wanted to make sure she has a chance to speak. Is that okay?

Marylou Blaisdell

It's fine.

Chairwoman Kelly

There's a couple of people on Zoom from the public. I see - Mr. Ballantine did you want to make public comment? Maybe not. No, that's okay. You're fine. And then I see, Sonia Prince was the only two public I see.

Sonia Prince

Hi. I guess it's hard for me to take this Committee super seriously when a lot of people that were chosen to be put on the Committee were already openly against...

Chairwoman Kelly

I'm sorry Sonia. Can you state your name and address for the record please.

Sonia Prince

Oh, yes. Sonia, Prince, 49 Tufts Drive. But I mean, it's nice and all the conversations that we're having but the idea of the committee giving a suggestion at the end, and most of the people on the committee had openly said they were against it before it all started is kind of one sided. So I'll take it with a grain of salt but I'm here because I don't want misinformation going around. Today, the Chief said that the city Board of Aldermen had voted down the Bill, which they didn't. You guys voted eight to six to table it. So I just want to make sure there's no misinformation like that going out but thank you for the opportunity.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you, Sonia.

Michael Carignan, Police Chief

Good evening. My name is Michael Carignan. I'm the Chief of the Nashua Police Department. I just want to thank each of the members of this Committee for taking your time to come and sit through this process. I disagree with other people saying that this process is unfair. People had opinions on both sides coming into it, including the Chairwoman of this Committee. So thank you for taking your time to sit and listen. I would ask that we have a little bit better definition of the direction we want to go. As I understand it correctly, the purpose of this Committee is to evaluate the current system we have, the strengths and weaknesses, is it a good system, is it not, does it need to be improved upon, and if so, where could it be improved upon.

The other thing we wanted to do is look at other systems to include the one proposed or one of its many variants that was proposed and see if any of those would be good and look at the whole process, look at all the positives and negatives for each side, and come up with a system that is well thought out, well defined, and articulated. So I believe that each of you has the ability as representatives of Nashua. People with a vested interest in the city to take a step back to listen and appreciate what the conversation in discussion is. The Nashua Police Department is committed to be open to new ideas. I think we've demonstrated that time and time again over the past several years that we are open to improving and working on things that we can do better. I appreciate you being willing to listen. I've committed to us being willing to make those same observations internally and externally to see what we can do better to make it the best PD even better. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Ms. Ortolano.

Laurie Ortolano

Hi, Laurie Ortolano, 41 Berkeley Street. Now I know I rolled in five minutes late so I'm not certain if the discussion is done already on 1, 4, 5, and 6.

Chairwoman Kelly

Nope, that's what we're on right now and you may just want to make sure you're pointed at the mic.

Laurie Ortolano

Okay perfectly fine. So public comment was below it so I was confused. You know, I too, would like to make certain that the group stays focused on its mission and what was discussed in the first meeting regarding gathering information from other communities and, you know, looking at what would be the best option for Nashua. But I also have a recommendation because I've done a lot of footwork over the last couple of weeks out in the community. I think those Aldermen that voted to table this initiative for whatever reasons you had, it would be helpful if you group together and wrote a letter that could be publicized as a Letter to the Editor or posted on Facebook that explains your position for wishing to table it. Because I think there's a lot of people out there that do not know that the Aldermen voted to table it, or that this was a split decision. I can assure you, they absolutely do not know and the word is not out there.

So I think it's very important to be clear and to be clear with the public what your position is. I mean I went to City Hall today to look at those petition verification sheets to see who verified those signatures and the Mayor personally verified 800 of those signatures out of the 2000. He's motivated. He's also still going door to door and today as I talked to residents on one street, a group of them had received a phone call from him on this issue just recently. So he's calling, he's going door to door still, and he, you know, gathered, witnessed 800 of these signatures. So there's a lot of motivation there on his part certainly to see this change happen. So I think I want to see the Aldermen who recommended tabling it for study be as motivated to pull together information to sign a group letter and put it out there very publicly as to why you voted to table it. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you, Ms. Ortolano. Anyone else from the chamber?

Marylou Blaisdell

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I want to come back to a couple of points and kind of following up on what committee member Dahl just said. In our very first meeting, one of my main questions was why now? Why now is the city looking at changing the way the Police Commissioner is set up and I don't feel I've had an answer to that question.

I also need to understand because I'm getting various answers from members of the community if I know in November when this is voted on if it is passed, that in fact we do change the way the Police Commissioner is appointed, then it seems to me it is set that it will go forward. I need clarification on that and if that is true, then our Committee is scheduled to continue meeting throughout the year. What impact and input will our Committee have to the Police Commission if the citizens are Nashua state we want to change from State appointment to local appointment?

I guess just to study the issue, I think we as a Committee need to understand what works with the current setup of the Police Commission and what doesn't work, and why, and why do we need it changed? That is my basic question. I'm coming into this study with an open mind I hope trying to listen to both sides. I don't have an opinion one way or the other. I need to know why it works today, and why it doesn't work today, and what we need to do to make it work, and I just think there's some basic issues, questions that we as a Committee need to have answered or I as a committee member need to answer. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

I thought I saw someone else on the Committee with their hand up. No? Okay. All right. So, oh.

Kerry Baxter

Kerry Baxter, 31 Harris Street. Just - I as well don't like to have misinformation out there. So I just like to clarify a point made earlier by Sonia Prince. The question was actually voted down eight to six and then it was tabled with a 13 to zero vote, which is contained within the minutes. That being said, I agree with both Nick and Ms. Blaisdell that we seem to be sort of spinning our wheels here without a whole lot of clear direction. I think we need to take a look at why it was it was

recommended to have a study group study this issue and then I also have some concerns with regardless of which way the vote goes, what impact are we going to have on decisions moving forward. So if it's a yes and the Commission is changed, we have a lot of work to do and it would be unfortunate if all of our work was remiss and none of our suggestions or our input were taken into consideration.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay. So I'm going to respond to some of this. I think - I appreciate all the comments from everybody. I think there's a lot to be done and there's a lot to figure out in terms of how we're going to do it. I believe at the beginning of this, we talked about not wanting to feel rushed in this discussion but making sure we were being thoughtful about it. For my own part, I know we set the aggressive schedule of meeting twice a month to an already busy aldermanic schedule trying to get in here. I have personally talked to multiple people about coming and have been trying to accommodate their schedules in terms of the Mayor, the Chief, you know, past Commissioners, that kind of thing. It is definitely a hurdle to make sure people can get on despite even having the ability to do Zoom. So I hear your frustrations. I have them myself but I, you know, I would kind of reflect it back to this group of we had originally talked about really doing the work in between our meetings. I think some clear thoughts as to who do we want at the next meeting and who can help get them there would be helpful and then who do you want when we only have three or four meetings before the election. We have the 18th, the 21st, and next Thursday as well. So of those three meetings, can we just spend the time since there is, you know, this is a smaller group of public than I was expecting coming up with what we want to talk about and who we want to have at those meetings. Does that sound like a good way forward here?

Okay. I actually think one of the things we should do is take advantage of having the Chief here if there are questions that we want to ask him directly and then we can talk about what we want to do with the next three meetings. I personally heard from someone like what is working with the current system. I thought you may want to, you know, just even just from a factual standpoint talk to us about how its working, what happens, and why you feel it works. Yeah you can come - you don't have to be in the public comment.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Thank you Alderwoman Kelly. I appreciate it. I appreciate you taking the time to talk about what's working currently with the Police Commission.

Chairwoman Kelly

Can you just state your name?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Yes. I apologize. My name is Michael Carignan, Chief of Police of the Nashua Police Department. So I appreciate you asking us to talk about what's working with the Police Commission currently and I've said it many times before, what isn't working with the Nashua Police Department? We are a model agency for everybody in the State and everybody in New England. We are looked to as leaders among law enforcement throughout the entire community, throughout the entire New England. People call for advice, people call for our help, people call for our expertise all over. We are nationally accredited. It is a distinction that is held by only 5% of all law enforcement agencies and amongst those accredited, we hold the highest accreditation certificates.

We currently have a process to hire officers that is industry best practice standards. We spend time with a written test, a physical test, an interview with three Supervisors, then they have to go to a Lieutenant or a Captain, and they get to a Deputy Chief interview, then are given a polygraph interview, then they have to take a polygraph examination, then they have to do a physical fitness test, a physical test with a doctor, and they have to meet with a psychologist. In addition to that, several officers will go through all of their previous employees, their residents, their friends, their best friends' cousins, their, their ex-girlfriends, their mom and dad. So the process that we go through before we hire anybody at the Nashua Police Department is extensive. It is more extensive than anything else that I can think of in this city. Each of those candidates are presented to the Commissioners who are aware of the process that goes on to vet them out. When I tell you that we are unable to discuss issues with certain people that apply and are rejected, I will tell you that some of the things that that process vets out would shock many people at who's applying for law enforcement positions. Each of the Commissioners are aware of the issues and they understand the process where we eliminate those people. An example two weeks ago, we had approximately 150 people sign up for a police recruit exam. At the end of the day, we had 17 interviews. People failed the written test. People feel the PT test. We had 17 candidates. Of those 17, we have two were prepared to put forward. That is how rigorous this processes and those two have not even gone through the extensive background process yet. So the Commission is aware of that. They at two levels get to review those

candidates and vote on those people.

So that is a system that is working very well. I believe each of you have complimented the Nashua Police Department many times, on many different issues, on many different topics. The reason you can complement them is because we spend all that time hiring and recruiting the right people. In addition to all that, we train those people. We give them constant training. We're constantly looking for new areas to train them in. For example as of late, you've heard a lot of cultural competency and diversity training. We have done exceptional amounts of training. On that, we've had people go out and get certified as trainers to be able to provide that training to the officers internally.

We've also dealt extensively with mental health issues. We have trained officers not only peer to peer and every officer receiving a minimum of eight hours, but over 20% of our workforce now has 40 additional hours of critical incident training, that they're better able to handle mental health. We're not the same police department as when I started. We change. We evolve. We improve. We're always looking for them to improvement. Each of those major things that we do, we present it to the Police Commissioners who listen, they ask questions, and then they approve or disapprove what we do. They certainly give guidelines. They're all residents of Nashua. They have lived here for many years. They're all active participants in the community.

Commissioner Nick Dahl I know he's on this Committee is very, very active and has been for years in Nashua PAL. Some people align that with being part of the Police Department. PAL is not part of the Police Department. We work cooperatively with them. Their mission is to connect kids with cops. Why wouldn't we get with them? That's their mission. They do a great job teaching kids in the inner city community about volunteerism, about homework, the importance of grades, mentorship. All those are lessons that we as police officers want these kids to know, because we won't be dealing with them in a negative way. It also gives us an opportunity to meet with those kids in a different level other than being reactive. We can get to know them. They can see us. We can play ball with them. We can help them do homework. We can take them pumpkin picking. These are all things that we do as police officers that gives these kids an opportunity to see us.

In addition to that, Commissioner Dahl his outside employment as an as an auditor for the federal government. He audits finances and policies for the federal government. Why wouldn't I want him as a Police Commissioner? He goes to our books every single month, asks questions, he's not afraid to call our Finance Manager and ask her questions about anything he sees is wrong. Alderman Jette, you were our liaison officer for a year. You are aware of the scrutiny that goes into the finances. You asked him many, many questions and I believe every time you had a question, they were answered. These Commissioners aren't afraid to ask the questions. So it's working. I say all that to really emphasize that there is currently no issues with the Nashua Police Department in the way it's being run.

The Commissioners are selected as members of the community. They're active, upstanding members. They listen to what the experts at the Police Department say and I say experts not to sound arrogant, but I tell you that for 28 years I've been a police officer. I've worked as a Patrolman; I've worked as a Detective; I've work in undercover; I've worked in many different areas of that Police Department that gives me experience in being aware of where the crimes are, where the problems are, and how to deal with them. I have a Master's Degree in Business as does one of my Deputies. Several of my Captains have or are working towards Master's Degrees in Business, which gives them a sense of how to manage the \$35 million budget that we have. We have to present that budget every year to the Police Commission. Again, they ask questions, they want to know what we spend our money on. Every single month, we show them. Every single month we show the three Police Commissioners who are Nashua residents, as well as the one to two Aldermen that are at every meeting listening and also able to ask questions. There's plenty of local control in how that works right now. I think that to look at all that and look at the product that the citizens are getting - and I know last week, we all got an e-mail that said Nashua was the third safest city in the country. That's pretty impressive and it's not number three for no reason. It's a reason because it has a great Police Department that works very hard to connect with the community and that Police Department is oversaw by three Nashua residents who care about the community, who pay taxes, who have raised their kids here, and who really care about Nashua. They ask questions, they don't rubber stamp everything we say, and they're privy to some private stuff that most people can't be aware of. So the question is, what is working with the Police Commission right now? I think everything is working. There are no problems that you can point out.

The last point I want to bring up regarding the Commission now is the diversity of the board. I've been very vocal. I've been very active in the Nashua Police Department in trying to diversify our officers and our civilian employees. I think it's critical to the community for people to see different faces, different looks when they're coming. Alderwoman Gathright I believe you and I have worked very closely together for years to try to accomplish this. It's not easy. You said it the other night, it's not easy to do but we're trying very hard and we're doing it. I don't have a say in who is selected as the Police Commissioner but I will say the people that do have not opted to present names. I've said it before recently that Commissioner Dahl was recently reappointed. For the past several months, I've been speaking about somebody calling the Governor and just presenting a name. Well, not one person who has been complaining about this issue presented a

name of a person of color or a female up to the Governor for consideration. So I ask how big of a problem is it? I would love to see a diversified board. I would love to have the discussion to move it from three to five people on that board. I think it's important for a broad spectrum of people to be there and I'd be absolutely willing to entertain it. I think it would be a healthy thing for the Department but I also think that bringing in that local political control to appoint those five is dangerous and it can go down a bad slope. I think the issue needs to be discussed. It needs to be looked at and that five is the issue that was mentioned in court today where it was more about bringing it from three to five people, that can be done with the system that's already in place. I want to caution everybody to remember that politicians are in office for a short period of time. There can be one political party one time, a couple years later, another political party comes up. They change. So the flavor of the day right now may change. If the roles were reversed, I think this conversation probably wouldn't be happening at this time. But it is, but I want everybody to remember the big picture long term and look at the quality of the Police Department you have. Long winded answer and I apologize but I think it's important to put that out there.

Chairwoman Kelly

You don't have to apologize Chief. I appreciate it. I jotted down some questions but I can hold mine for other committee members. Go ahead.

Kerry Baxter

Thank you. Chief I'm glad you brought up the fact about being open to going from three to five. I would like to hear what you have to say as far as your opinion on that pros and cons and let's not right now concern ourselves with where those people come from or how they're appointed, but just how it would work pros and cons as far as getting people in a room. I obviously have some knowledge having worked at the Police Department that sometimes it can be difficult just to get the three Commissioners along with two Deputy Chiefs and the Chief and all the schedules to match up. So I'd like to hear what your thoughts are as far as three versus five, pros and cons for each.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Thank you, Kerry. It's a great question and I don't think there is a need for five Commissioners on the committee. We have three Commissioners and as I said before, one to two Aldermen are usually present. To have three can be challenging to make sure you have a quorum to make sure you have enough people there to get the vote going. It's also adding two more people to be privy to a lot of background information and a lot of personnel information. There's been a lot of discussion about well, every other, you know, Commission in the city operates this way. Police departments are different. We deal with very sensitive information. We deal with classified information. We deal with things that the Commissioners will have to be vetted on. So to broaden that from three to five, it's putting out that much more information. I'm sure the people that are selected will be able to handle that and manage it and will be vetted out to do it. It's just I don't see the need for five. I don't see what the added value to having two extra people other than giving an opportunity immediately to diversify that that Commission.

Kerry Baxter

May I ask a follow up to that?

Chairwoman Kelly

Sure can.

Kerry Baxter

Thank you. You hit on some of the information that these Commissioners are privy to with regards to it being very sensitive, both with criminal investigations and personnel in-house situations. Without getting into specific situations, can you discuss a little bit about that so that the other people on this Committee in this study group and people listening have a sense of what it is that's involved that's a little bit different than everything that is public record or talking about something that happens on a road or a variance.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Sure. I appreciate that. Our Police Commission meetings are set up in basically two different areas - public and non-public. The public gets access to all the crimes has been reported over the past month and it goes through every division of the Police Department to highlight some of the things of significance that happened over that month, including in that

that portion is a presentation of our budget of where we are at the fiscal year, how much we spend, where we're spending our money, what our functional strength is, and stuff like that. In a non-public meeting is where all the sensitive information is presented. Included in that is the backgrounds of the people that apply to be police officers and those backgrounds get pretty extensive. They're privy to the information about some of their criminal backgrounds, or what could be perceived as kind of backgrounds, or some potential issues that would hurt their reputation if it was made public. Now we don't necessarily hire those people, however, they get that information as part of being a Police Commissioner.

The Commissioners are also brought up to speed on an internal investigations. So they're aware of when an internal complaint comes in, what the allegations are, what the status of the investigation is, and what the outcome is. They're also the final arbiter is for any internal investigations, meaning they're presented in any discipline. They'll make a decision on what the outcome should be and they are the final right to appeal that discipline from the officer or from the civilian, whomever it may be. So they have to review all that and present that.

Finally, there are times when we as an agency get asked to do sensitive information involving other sensitive entities. That's obviously very highly sensitive and it can't be information that's put out until it's completely investigated and found to be unfounded or founded in which case, we would investigate it. So they're privy to a degree to a lot of that information. They're also inside the building with access to the computers, which means they have to be vetted out. (inaudible) compliant officers to be able to go through training to know what they can and cannot see and use on their computer. Does that answer your question?

Kerry Baxter

Yes. Thank you.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Other committee members? I'm making sure I'm not missing anyone on the - go ahead, Marylou.

Marylou Blaisdell

Chief, you mentioned that the Commissioners are also vetted. Who vets them and what kind of vetting process takes place for a Commissioner?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Sure, it's a good question. Because they would be my boss, the investigation or the background is done by the New Hampshire State Police. Colonel Noyes who will call - hey, we have a new Police Commissioner. Can you do a background? We will do the sieges computer training to allow them to use the computer inside the house but the State Police will do the criminal background and they'll make sure all of those protocols are followed. In the event that there's an issue, they will let us know but I believe they also let the Executive Council know. That I can't confirm though.

Marylou Blaisdell

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

I have a number of questions. Okay. So actually to follow on to that question there, you were talking about the vetting is done by the State Police. But you were talking about before that, you know, the Commissioner to my left who was just reappointed but nobody was able to weigh in. I'm really interested in like, who can weigh in and how are they told that they're able to weigh in?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Well I guess like any committee in the city, if you do just a little bit of research, you can find out how to get appointed and in the event of the Police Commissioners, you can call up to the Governor's office and put your name up there for consideration. That name gets I would assume gets submitted with several other names and the decision is made which

to bring forward. That decision would be based on meeting the requirements of who is a Nashua resident, who is an active, upstanding member of the city of the community, and then the Governor will decide who he or she feels is the best candidate, and present them to the Executive Council for approval.

Chairwoman Kelly

So to clarify, the Governor can reject anybody in that first round...

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Correct.

Chairwoman Kelly

... before it even goes to Council?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Correct.

Chairwoman Kelly

And then my next follow on question was about requirements. So Nashua resident is important but you were also talking about having a certain level of expertise. Maybe this is an opinion question but what makes a good Commissioner?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So I definitely think that's an opinion question and my answer is what makes a good Commissioner is a diverse Commissioner. And by that I mean, you have a broad set of experiences as Nashua residents to be able to sit on. You have to step back and ask yourself, what is the role of a Commissioner? What is the role of a Police Commissioner need to be? A Police Commissioner should not be somebody that tries to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Police Department. And no disrespect to any Police Commissioner, current or past, but they don't have the law enforcement experience or the up-to-date training and the daily experience that the members of my staff have in running that Police Department. That's our job. If we're not doing it well and there's complaints, it's their job to ask questions and complain and make sure that I can explain what we're doing and if I can't, answer why. If I can't provide those answers, then my job is at stake because that's my responsibility is to be able to do that.

So what makes a good Commissioner is a person that can listen, is a person that has a good sense of community, that understands the community of Nashua and has been here for a while, and understands that their purpose is to represent the citizens of Nashua to ensure that we're doing what we're supposed to be doing as a police agency.

Chairwoman Kelly

So and this is an opinion, but how many of the Commissioners now we're past police officers or Police Department employees?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

There was one - Commissioner Matt Plante and I will speak openly about it because I know he and I have had conversations. Commissioner Plante was a police officer in the early '80s. He was a police officer for I believe, four years. He resigned his position not because of any internal investigation. It was because of payments not being or financially he had better opportunities and that was very common at that time. People didn't do the 20 - 25 years in bulk like they did back then. Certain allegations have been made public about his role as a police officer, and being investigated, and being terminated, or being sued by being sued and having the city had to pay out. It's not uncommon for police officers to become involved in arrests where people sue. It's also if you dig deep into that situation, you would know that the Commissioner had an investigation done. He's went to an outside agency for that investigation. A polygraph was done. He was exonerated. So there was nothing for him to hide. He was a police officer for a couple of years, had no supervisory experience, and to my knowledge had no detective experience, which to me gives him a very limited experience in running that Police Department.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay, great. I'm going to ask a question that's not on this topic anymore. I just wanted to check the room to see if anyone else has questions.

Alderman Jette

Thank you. Chief you talked about the fact that Commissioner Dahl was just re-appointed and that to your knowledge, and I think you said that you verify this with the Governor's office, no one from the city put forth a name or to be a replacement Commissioner?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So just for point of record, my statement was I called it that morning and nobody from the Mayor or the Board of Aldermen presented a name to be considered.

Alderman Jette

So are you aware of anything that the Governor did or the Governor's office did to solicit any input from the city whether it was the Mayor, or the Board of Aldermen, or the general public in Nashua to alert them that the Commissioner was being seeking reappointment and that would the Governor do anything to ask people whether they had any feedback about, you know, and I know nothing. I know nothing that would disqualify Commissioner Dahl but did the Governor's office or the Executive Council seek any information from people in Nashua about whether they thought Commissioner Dahl was doing a good job and whether they had a replacement to suggest to the Governor. Do you know of anything that was done in that regard?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

I do not know who they spoke to or who anyone spoke to, if anyone. I know I was not asked any questions about Commissioner Dahl.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Can I continue?

Chairwoman Dahl

Sure.

Alderman Jette

You also said that you talked about the hiring practices and the training, and, you know, the fact that the Department has improved over the years. I think those are all truthful statements. I think the Department does have very good hiring practices and excellent training. I've heard that people, recruits, people who want to become police officers in Nashua one of the reasons they seek the position is because of the excellent training that's provided. But, you know, could you help me understand why do you think any of that would change if the Commissioners were selected in a different way?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Sure. I appreciate the question. And as I've been saying all along, my deepest concern here - first and foremost, I'm not accusing any - despite what's being said, I'm not accusing any sitting Alderman or Mayor of doing this. But I'm saying is when you have the local political control and influence, there is a much greater vested interest in what's happening. Meaning, in a negative way, meaning if the potential is much greater for a person in local government who's nominating and re-nominating Police Commissioners to have loyalties owed to them. So yep, I'll nominate you again, sure. You want to be a Police Commissioner, I'll nominate you. It brings a closer level to Nashua, an influence from Nashua than the State does. So the Governor does it now, the Executive Council reviews. It feels that they're good choices and approves them. To have that local control, to me is dangerous because it allows a little bit more influenced with people that are invested closer too.

And there's a couple examples I will give. If you look at cities like Methuen, Massachusetts. They just went through a crisis situation with their Police Department where nephews, brothers, family members were being hired from all different

people within internally. Friends of the local politicians were being hired and brought on to that police department and they had many difficulties and many problems with that PD. When you start bringing in that local influence, number one - people within the agency don't feel like they can succeed on their own merit. They feel like there's definitely political play involved as far as who you know, not necessarily what you do. By having that control outside of local politics and Nashua, the officers know that they're going to be promoted based on their merit. They're going to be promoted based on the job that they do. They don't have to worry about who they know and the closer you bring that to home, the more likely that's going to happen. It may not happen overnight. November 3rd if this vote goes through, the Nashua Police Department or the City of Nashua is not going to explode but over time, the reputation is going to erode and people will be less willing to come up here because it's the same old, same old. We don't go to Massachusetts because it's who you know a lot down there in a lot of those communities who you know and who he related to. At Nashua, that's not the case and that gives people confidence that they can come up here, they can do their job, they can work hard, and they can progress at the level that they deserve without having to worry about that political influence of who you know. I think that's the critical risk that we're running by making this change.

Alderman Jette

So currently the system is that the Governor nominates the commissioner and the Governor's Council approves or disapproves the commissioner. But to become a Commissioner, you have to be nominated by the Governor and approved by the Executive Council.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Correct.

Alderman Jette

Currently, and for a long time, the Governor of New Hampshire has not been a resident of Nashua. The Executive Councilors have kind of switched, you know, right now, Councilor Wheeler lives in Milford. We've had Councilor Pignatelli, who is a Nashua resident and they've kind of switched back and forth over the years. When Counselor Pignatelli was a Nashua resident, was on the Executive Council, I'm not aware - I guess I would ask you, did she exercise any undue influence over the Police Department?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

She didn't. And you're making my point for me so I appreciate that. She didn't because she is separated at that State level. She has much less vested interest in the day-to-day operations of Nashua. The government that she controls, controls the State. She's vetted the people out. She's evaluated them and knows that they're solid, good people deserving of this position. But she doesn't have that local control into the day-to-day operations. She's not picking. She's not daily, beholden to different citizens for that to the level that the Mayor and the Aldermen are. Right. So when you have it outside, when you have the current situation with Executive Council Wheeler, he's not a Nashua resident but they still go through the vetting process. To me, that's even better because it says okay these people live in Nashua. They're people that will represent Nashua Police Commissioners well. They deserve to be there based on what we see in their background or what we've heard about their resume. But then they have no vested interest to try to get that person to influence who gets hired, or put forward a name, or get that 69 to make it a 70. There's a lot less separation there. Is there a risk that it could happen? Of course there is. There's a small degree, but it's separated to me local to State and that separation makes it much easier to be able to keep that out.

Alderman Jette

Thank you very much.

Chairwoman Kelly

Of course.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you. I'd like to just comment on something that the Chief brought up about, you know, the quality of our Police Department and how it's sought after by police officers - people who want to be the best department they can be and that's why they come to Nashua. There's nothing wrong with what's going on at our Police Department at all. We have the best Police Department bar none in the State of New Hampshire, in New England, and one of the best I would say in the

country. To change that for no good reason - I haven't heard a good reason why this needs to be changed. What is going wrong at our Police Department or with our Police Commission that we need to make a change like this? Nothing that I've heard. Nothing that says hey, we better do this or else. Something's gonna happen. Nothing.

So my concern is valid, I think, that once you start appointing local people, you know, hey, I'll reappoint your next term but I don't want you to vote on the budget. I want you to cut the budget. I want you to cut ammunition. I want you to cut this or that and it starts to erode. We have the best Police Department and our citizens deserve the best Police Department. That's what we have and I think it would be a shame for us to change that because that's what they've come to - they deserve it.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Can I follow up with one point? So along the lines of the budget, and thank you Alderman Wilshire, along the lines of the budget and the control that we have, you Aldermen control my budget. You tell me what I can and cannot spend. I've been fortunate enough that over the past couple of years I've been able to articulate why we need the money that we need, and how we go about spending it, and what we're looking to do, and you've listened, and even though some of you disagree with that you have supported us to get us what we need to do our jobs. There hasn't always been times when we have been supported by the Aldermen. There's been times when the Aldermen says no, we're not going to give you that money. Okay I have to work within that budget. I work within my means. A classic example of that is the Police Commission has authorized me to have 187 police officers. We're only budgeted for 179. I can't hire any more than 179 because the Aldermen have not given me the money to do so. That's control. That's control it limits what the Police Commission says I can do but the local Nashua politicians say nope you can't because we're not going to give you that money. I will try to continue to explain why I want the money why the 187 but if you say no, I don't get it.

Local control also shows what I explained earlier, one to two of you coming to our meetings each month asking questions. It is a meeting like any other city meeting, but we were pretty open as you know about allowing questions to be asked. If you had a question about the budget, we would answer it. If you have any questions off meeting time about our budget, Ms. Smith would welcome you in and have you sit down and explain to you any of the questions. That's local control. You're at that meeting asking those questions. If you have concerns, you're presenting them publicly and I don't recall any issues publicly being brought up by the Commission, the aldermanic liaisons to our – Alderman Jette you were very vocal about our budgets and you weren't afraid to pick it apart and ask us questions. We answered them all, I think to your satisfaction. Didn't always agree together but that's what we did. You wanted you wanted to know what was going on. Any different question was fair game and we will answer it for you. That's local control. So please don't, you know, assume that the system would right now it's completely beholden to the Governor. The Aldermen have control of our Police Department. I can only spend what you guys authorize me to spend.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you, Chief. I had a question. I know there's some discussion around investigations and previous, you know, Boards of Aldermen that have had investigations. Could you just talk a little bit about that process? If it were to happen right now, you needed to investigate the Board of Aldermen, where would that start? And where would it go?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So if a complaint came in right now of an offense committed by an Alderman, we would open an investigation and it would depend on what the allegations were. We would make the Police Commission aware that there was an investigation and we would proceed to investigate like we would any other crime. If it rose to a certain level, and I can't give you a definitive answer of what that threshold is, the FBI may be notified, or the appropriate federal agency may be notified, or the Attorney General's Office may be notified. Again, I can't give you what that threshold is. It's a discussion that we would have but we would certainly investigate that crime and whatever happens if we are able to determine probable cause that an offense was committed, we would do an arrest warrant and bring charges forward.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. So there is a certain case in the past that's been talked about. Is that the same process that happened with that case?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Yeah, so I will - my answer to that question is you've heard former Chief Hefferan speak of those allegations. I think it's appropriate since he has the first-hand knowledge of that investigation that this Committee asks him. You're asking me to

give you information, you know, that I've read off a report or talked to from different people. He was part of that investigation. He spoke to the witnesses and I think it's appropriate, he's accessible to ask him those questions.

Chairwoman Kelly

I would very much like to be able to contact him so we can talk after.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Send me an email. He's more than willing to speak to you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay, great.

Kerry Baxter

Chief with regards to other investigations in the city that the Nashua Police Department has been involved in, can you just touch on what other investigations that Nashua PD has had to handle with regards to other complaints from other divisions or whatnot in the city?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Sure. You know some of the investigations were never prosecuted. So I'll be careful about what I give for information. I don't generally like to present this Committee with vague scenarios but if charges weren't brought forward and some of those cases are sensitive and private, I'm not going to give details on it. But we have investigated local city officials for various narcotics or drug complaints, theft complaints involving city property, different allegations of misuse of funds, and department or city property - whether it be certain things used to repair things in the city. So there's been different divisions have been investigated for different offenses. We've also been asked to provide assistance with internal investigations from those departments. If there's an allegation committed, we have the expertise in conducting an internal investigation and the history of being able to do so. So they'll ask our advice and how to do that.

Kerry Baxter

And is that information shared with the current Commissioners?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

There is information that at the appropriate time they will be made aware of, correct. They don't necessarily know all the people involved from the beginning until we are able to substantiate any criminal offenses or criminal charges.

Kerry Baxter

Thank you.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Okay, the scenarios sheet that you just gave us, are you saying that if Commissioners were chosen by the Board of Aldermen or the Mayor as in the as in the Bill that we have – well it's not even a Bill anymore, but do you think that - my question is do you believe with this scenario that if the Commissioners was chosen by the Board that you would not be able to do what you just talked about? You gave about six, seven different scenarios. So is that what you're saying that it would not happen that way?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Nope, nope and you brought that point up a couple of times and I want to clarify it because you've misinterpreted how we've presented information Alderman. We would still do the investigation but it would be a lot more difficult because there would be political pressure put on different levels of the Police Department to maybe not look into an investigation, or to not dig as deep into it, or to let us handle it and just ignore it if it's a crime. We would have to still investigate that crime and we would do so. However, it would be done with a lot of nervousness and a lot more anxiety and trepidation on the officer's part. So the officers of the Nashua Police Department are held to the highest standard. They will do their job but

it would be more difficult and there would be a lot more anxiety and pressure put on them to do that because of the political influences that are being exerted.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

So and correct me if I'm wrong, what I'm hearing you saying that the Board that's elected by the constituents would put so much pressure on you or on the Police Department that you're not quite capable of doing the job the way you typically would do it because you would be frustrated or feel pressured because it's the Board that selected the Commissioners.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

What I'm saying is we would do the job and it would just be more difficult. It's one more piece of influence and pressure that we would have to deal with or we shouldn't have to deal with which we don't have to deal with now.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Okay. What I hear with that, to be honest with you, is what I'm hearing is that the people that are elected here in this room to serve the people of Nashua that they're not straight up honest people. That's what I'm hearing,

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Well unfortunately Alderwoman Gathright, I believe you're hearing wrong. You're not listening to me. I believe that we would do that job and I'm not saying that there's anybody in the city right now that would behave that way but there could be and that's the risk that you're running and there doesn't need to be because the system we have now gives an extra layer of isolation of insulation for the officers doing that job. I'm not saying that there's corruption but in the past, there has been. There has been an influence from aldermen putting pressure on the police not to do a certain investigation. They did it and the Aldermen went to federal prison for it but it's still very difficult to do. Now we don't have to deal with that and it was easier for them to do because they didn't have to worry about those phone calls the aldermen were making. They didn't have to worry about the pressures put on well, I'm going to be voting on your budget in six months so, you know, we'll do what we have to do. We'll do the investigation but it's one less set of pressures that we have to deal with. Am I saying that anyone on this Board would do that? Absolutely not. So please make it very clear not accusing anybody on this Board of doing that, but what I'm saying is, is a greater risk because of the changes you want to bring.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Gathright?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Yeah for now.

Alderman Jette

Thank you. Chief coincidentally, I happen to - I'm a lawyer and I happen to be talking to a client who has come to me for his father had died and he was asking me to help him with the probate of the estate. It just happened that this guy during our conversation, he told me that he was a former police officer in Dover and that he was now working with the Sheriff's Department in Stratford County and that that he also was a trainer for CALEA. An evaluator, whatever, and that he went all around the country, you know better than I doing the job that CALEA does to certify police departments, and I told him about, you know, what the issue that we're dealing with in Nashua about whether to change from the current system to a system, you know, to having the Commissioners appointed by the Mayor, and President of the Board of Aldermen, and confirmed by the Board of Aldermen. I told him of your, you know, the concern that you had expressed and Chief Hefferan had had told us about. I said what, you know, what do you say to that? Dover, by the way, they have a different system than we have. I said, what do you think of that? He said that it is against the law to interfere with a police investigation in that any whether it was a selectman, or alderman, or city councilor who tried to stop the police from doing an investigation or try to influence an investigation would be violating the law and we'd be subject to arrest or referral to the County Attorney or the Attorney General's office. So what do you say about that?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Well to reinforce what I said to Alderwoman Gathright, we would do our job and we would enforce it. It's just more difficult. It puts a lot of pressure on the officers to do it and it puts just a lot of caution in how they go about doing their job. So it

makes it very difficult when it shouldn't be difficult. They should be able to go in and conduct an investigation properly. I would say we would investigate those situations but it would be more difficult and it would be just a situation presented putting these officers in that they wouldn't need to be. Remember, I'm not talking just about the investigations, I'm talking about the hiring processes. I'm talking about those daily decisions. All those influences add up and the more local you keep it.

Regarding your friend, I would welcome him or her to come in here and testify in front of this Committee as to those opinions because I think it offers valuable insight. I know for a fact that Bill Pease who is a very well established and respected CALEA assessor is going to be speaking in front of you in a couple of weeks. He'll be there to answer any questions. I'm sure he would welcome the dialogue with your friend to confirm that stuff. So to answer your question, it is against the law, and we would investigate it, and we would complete the investigation properly, and make arrests where appropriate. But I'm saying it's more difficult and all those little local influences make it more difficult in a job that's already very difficult and the job that right now is being done without those difficulties and its being done very well.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Looking at my Work Study Committee members on Zoom, making sure I didn't miss any hands or questions there. Kendra your hand looks like it's up. Is that intentional?

Kendra Smith

Yeah, so I just have a question for the Chief. I guess as just the average person off the street who kind of got brought into this Committee to learn, my question kind of mimics Ms. Gathright's comment. From the average person, it kind of seems like when we're voting for our local aldermen, right, and our Mayor, that's our job as the constituents to put them in place, right? So I hear you saying that you don't trust us to put the proper people in place to be your boss and then you don't want your boss in your building to actually oversee what you're doing. That's kind of like what the average person hears or at least that's what I'm hearing.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Well I'm sorry that you feel that way and I wish I was presenting the information more effectively because apparently, it's being misconstrued. I don't have a mistrust with the Aldermen or the Mayor. I work very closely with them. We work on a number of projects. We've worked very, very closely together. We've been able to work effectively. My point is that local level of influence, political influence, can change and alter the day-to-day operations. Again, it's that much closer to someone to say, well, we're going to the budget, or the Mayor really wants to see this, and he appointed us so we're gonna kind of focus that way. It just brings that in and makes it more difficult for us to do our job and it just brings a level of political influence that doesn't need to be there.

Kendra Smith

So then I feel like the integrity of the police officers, the Commissioners that have been put into office has to be brought into play then because you're going to do the right thing whether somebody is watching you or not, correct? That's the point.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Yeah and that's what I'm saying, we wouldn't do the right thing but that local influence makes it more difficult. Again, I would challenge you to speak with former Chief Hefferan who was the investigating detective at the time, who did the right thing, charges were brought forward but he would be able to give you that firsthand experience of what that was like and it shouldn't have to be there. The people of Nashua, I guess, the message I want to get to you is we have a system that keeps that out and still maintains a high level of local control. By doing that, you as a citizen get the best of both worlds. You get the local control; you get the oversight by the Alderman and you get the knowledge and the relief to know that there isn't that local political influence. Because again, you may feel strongly about one political candidate and the other

one is in power and you may not like the decisions that are being made there. So the Police Department will do our job. We have done it and we've shown we will do it but it just keeps that level of insulation which I think the public would want.

Kendra Smith

I think we should respect the public's opinion as they vote on it and that's what they want, then that's what we should do. I mean, it's our city. You know what I mean? It doesn't just belong to the, you know, just a small group of people who feel like they make decisions for everybody. I personally didn't know anything about this until I was asked to be on the Committee. So the average Joe has no clue how any of this is done. It's just done. Honestly like not just speaking on this topic but being somebody, a citizen, who's grown up here since I was 13 years old. I'm 44 now. I know you as a police officer, I'm sure you recognize my face. However, I feel like the knowledge is not there for the average Joe to even know what's going on. They're like these changes just happened. There's a lot of things that are going on in Nashua right now that I'm just now learning because a lot of people are bringing me in to be that voice because I feed the kids and I do a lot of my community but people just don't know these things. Like it's not out there for people to see like can I call and say, hey, I want Linda Gathright to be the next Commissioner? I would never know that and is that even possible? Like if a group of people can call the Governor and then it's always political. The Governor is still going to put in who they feel even if we feel somebody else would be better for that position.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So let me ask you, what issues do you have the way the system is currently being run that you would change?

Kendra Smith

I'll be completely honest. I think diversity is the biggest thing and I also think that diversity training for the police officers is a huge thing that hasn't been going on for years that's just now being implemented. The cameras – those should have been on. There's so many things that go on in Nashua. There's - let's see, I've worked in the school for the last six years, why do we not have metal detectors? Why are children allowed to bring knives and guns into these schools? Like there's a lot of things that are going on that should be fixed?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Okay.

Kendra Smith

It's not like minor stuff.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

Can I address some of those issues?

Kendra Smith

Absolutely.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

The issue with the metal detectors in the school is not an issue from the Police Department, that's an issue for the School Board. We can't make that decision for the schools. So that has to be there. The issues of knives and guns being brought into school, there's a very, very, very low level of violence in the Nashua school system. So I don't see...

Kendra Smith

As a parent, I'd rather have none but that's okay.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So would everybody and as a (inaudible) person, I'd like to see no crime in this world but that's not the reality and we have to deal with that. You know, we have a system that has been working very well and I think you as a business owner would agree that Nashua is a very safe city. I would hope that you feel safe at night knowing that the Nashua Police Department

is here.

Kendra Smith

Sometimes.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

We are professional. We're well trained. Regarding the diversity training, for the past four years we've been working very hard to get all of our officers culturally competency training to the point where even the command staff has gone through levels of being able to teach that to outside agencies. We teach at the Academy. We teach all police officers. Our officers are trained to do the instruction. They teach those officers everyone in the State about cultural awareness, about diversity, about de-escalation techniques. That's the Nashua Police Department doing those teachings up there. We're instructing that. We have been working very, very hard to become a culturally effective organization. That is not something that's happening with outside influences, that's a decision we are making as an agency to really dial in and be a part of the community and respect and work with every person of color, every person that disability, every person of various genders. Those are all trainings that we do on a regular basis. Dealing with mental health people like I spoke to earlier. We're working very hard to effectively work with all of them and all that's being done with the approval of the current Police Commission. And again, I would say, if you look to the Nashua Police Department, we are leaders among all law enforcement in New Hampshire, in New England, and I think that should tell you okay, so we're doing it right. We should have other people strive to be more like the Nashua Police Department.

Chairwoman Kelly

Are you all set Kendra?

Kendra Smith

Yes. I don't think that has really anything to do with the practices of the Police Department. Maybe just the way that you guys are elected. Should be a little more, you know, a little more public for people to know when the election is, who's being selected, and how they're being selected.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay. I actually had a question Chief around - you've been talking about this influence piece. One of the things in the legislation was how the Commissioners are removed and changing that. There Commissioners hear can you talk about what the current system is, but, you know, I would love to hear your thoughts on what's in the legislation in terms of how they could be removed.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So as I understand the legislation correctly, a Police Commissioner can be removed at the will of the Mayor, with the approval of the Board of Aldermen. I'm not sure if that's the majority, or if it is attend to five majority, or just a simple majority. It's not very clear what those mechanisms are. It's not really clear what the mechanisms in that legislation are to handle how that process works. It's also not clear that there's vague language in there regarding current sitting Commissioners who may be related to a current Alderman. In one section, it says it can't happen. In another section, it says current Police Commissioners will be able to serve out their term. So there's definitely some issues with the legislation that would need to be hashed out and worked out for clarification.

Chairwoman Kelly

Can either of the Commissioners that are here talk about if something were to happen or I guess I'm open to the whole - like if they wanted to remove one now it's not the Mayor's approval, how does it work?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

So I guess the process would be that the Governor approves the removal of the Police Commissioner based on whatever the allegations are, and that those allegations could be presented by the Police Department, by the Aldermen, or by anybody really if they have a factual basis to do so. Then they could present it to the Governor to remove the current Police Commissioner

Chairwoman Kelly

Would it have to go to the Executive Council or can the Governor just do it on his own accord?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

I don't want to answer that and give you bad information.

Chairwoman Kelly

No, that's fair. This is a piece of it that I particularly didn't like.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

I've never gone through that process so I don't know what that mechanism is from the Governor down to the Executive Council but I'm sure we can get you an answer.

REMARKS BY THE COMMITTEE

Chairwoman Kelly

We got a few weeks, right? Okay. I'll jot that down as something that we still have a question on. Did I see hand over here?

Sorry, I'm just jotting down my note. Okay. So I think we've had a really good discussion tonight. Thank you for being here, Chief. I pulled up my notes on our upcoming meetings and what was a currently listed, you know, last week we were gonna have Chief here. We had Deputy Chief. This week we have the Chief here. Executive Councils - we are still trying to pin down a day where they could meet us.

So the next upcoming meetings here, this is the seventh right? Today's the seventh - is Monday the 18th, which is second Ward meeting and then we're supposed to have a general work study discussion. It sounds like this Committee has a number of people they would like to have in that discussion following. The list that I made was the Councilors. I did speak with former Counselor Pignatelli. She said Thursdays weren't great, so I was gonna send her that Monday and confirm before we put that on there for sure. But we also had mentioned Chief Hefferan and Bill Pease. Did you say that was the 18th as well?

Police Chief Michael Carignan

If I may?

Chairwoman Kelly

Sure.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

A couple of things. First and foremost, I'd like to apologize for last week. I was not able to attend. Deputy Chief Testaverde attended. Neither of us were aware of what the agenda item was. We were not advised that we were to be doing a presentation on it. So I apologize greatly. I would have altered my schedule, my personal schedule, to be here with a presentation ready. Hopefully, again, I apologize to him because I threw him under the bus and he had to operate on the fly. So I apologize. Moving forward, any expectations of us just let me know via e-mail and I will be happy to be fully prepared for it. I'm not sure the date of Bill Pease but he spoke to me today. He is prepared to speak.

Kerry Baxter

I have that information, actually, because I had reached out to Mr. Pease because he is retired Hudson law enforcement. Currently the Accreditation Manager for the Nashua Police Department and he indicates he is probably going to be available for our meeting on the 21st.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

And I will connect you via e-mail with former Chief Tim Hefferan.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay, thank you. I appreciate that.

Police Chief Michael Carignan

I'm sorry. Finally, I will give you an answer. I'll find out the answer to that process from the Governor to the Executive Council and I will submit that via e-mail.

Chairwoman Kelly

That would be great. Thank you.

Okay, so it sounds like we have our next Ward meeting. We're going to try to do as many of the Councilors that we could potentially get there. I know that Deb has said she will try to make it for that 18th. I will double check that and I will see if there's anyone else. Do we want to have the current Executive Councilor invited to one or both of the upcoming meetings, see what fits our schedule? It's tough because it's like I'd love it to be always all the Councilors but sometimes Monday does work for this person. Thursday - and we're already working within, you know, people who've built up their schedules. So I guess my question would just be Pignatelli can come. Do we also want to talk to the current Councilor?

Unidentified Female Speaker

Yes.

Chairwoman Kelly

I see a yes. Okay. So Wheeler. Okay. I'll add that. I have a list of people to reach out to. And then we're confirmed with CALEA trainer. Is that what he is? Evaluator. There we go, okay, on October 21st.

So back to where we started, are there other pieces that we want to make sure that we get in the next few weeks that we haven't covered? My original list was past, current Chiefs. We talked about past, current Commissioners and Councilors.

Unidentified Male Speaker

So I think it's good that we invite some former Chiefs and some former Commissioners. I'm sure we can brainstorm a list.

Chairwoman Kelly

Yeah, I think that would be great and we can do it via e-mail, or phone call, however that works. I'm sure you guys know more former than I do. Alright, so I have that as a priority item here. Anything else before we close the meeting?

Alderman Wilshire

Tonight we had an opportunity for the public - Wards one - I don't have my agenda in front of me.

Chairwoman Kelly

They got mixed around. But yes.

Alderman Wilshire

Okay so is there a better way that we can advertise, or get the word out there, or market this somehow so that people participate, show up, or?

Chairwoman Kelly

Yeah it's a good question. It's one that I've struggled with all kinds of things. We have public comments for big stuff and

nobody shows up. So I'm always grappling with like we put it at the typical places like Library, and online, etc.

Alderman Wilshire

Maybe we could will something scrolling on TV or I don't know. It just seems like it'd be nice to get some public here more than the couple and I don't mean to insult any of you that showed up but.

Chairwoman Kelly

No I agree and that was part of it. That was one of the big pieces that I wanted. So you know what - there has been suggestions that sometimes weekends are better for people. But, and I know that, Ms. Soucy had talked about, you know, within her Ward it's not everybody's going on the city website and that kind of thing. Is there a way to get some outreach out? I would say that my initial reaction is our next meeting doesn't have to be specific to those words. Let's just get anyone who would like to speak on it to come and we can work on getting some outreach out there. So you said the TV. I think there's a couple other things we could do to get it out there. Anything else?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Madam Chair I have a comment actually. The last session last week, I thought it was really informative to hear from what's happening now in the State of New Hampshire in terms of Commissioners, and how they've been chosen, and those types of things. Miss Shaheen and Eva Castillo, and Mark Brave. It was quite informative. So I would say to the public if you have not heard anything other than what we've done or what's been said in this room, that you might go back and take a look at - what was the date on that one?

Chairwoman Kelly

It was the 30th. It was last Thursday I believe.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

September 30th Commission meeting. I think saying the name of it correctly.

Unidentified Male Speaker

Work Study Group.

Chairwoman Kelly

You're good. Yeah Work Study Commissioner meeting.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Because it was quite enlightening.

Chairwoman Kelly

Yeah, yeah. Okay, if we are all set. We went through discussion. There is a public comment on here but I don't see any public here. Does anyone from the Committee want to make additional remarks? We're good? Okay. Do I have a motion?

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY NICHOLAS DAHL TO ADJOURN BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Kelly, Marylou Blaisdell, Kendra Smith, Kerry Baxter, Nicholas Dahl 5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Nicholas Dahl, Committee Clerk